ako vhodná didaktická pomôcka na vyhľadávanie a rekonštrukciu mnohých myšlienkových experimentov, predovšetkým v úvodných kurzoch do filozofickej metodológie, teórie argumentácie, či filozofie myšlienkových experimentov. Na druhej strane, aj širšia čitateľská obec dostáva do rúk prácu, ktorá ju môže príjemne prekvapiť i pobaviť príkladmi úvah, ktorými filozofi vypĺňajú svoj čas.

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David Shoemaker: *Personal Identity and Ethics: A Brief Introduction*
Ontario: Broadview Press 2009, 296 pages

In his book *Personal Identity and Ethics – A Brief Introduction,* David Shoemaker presents a uniquely comprehensive treatment of the relationship between personal identity and identity-related ethical concerns. The author proceeds in a clear and reader-friendly manner, starting with the definitions of the key concepts in the field, going on to particular theories of personal identity and their connections to several practical concerns, and concluding with methodological issues of a higher level of abstraction.

The general strategy of the book is to see whether certain concerns that have traditionally been taken to presuppose the concept of personal identity (such as responsibility, distributive justice, compensation, etc.) can be (and need to be) justified by a theory of personal identity, and which theory, if any, can do the job. If successful, such a theory would cohere with our intuitions about when the practical concerns are justified and propose a criterion of personal identity which would *explain why* the concerns are justified. Of course, some of our intuitions about the appropriateness of the practical concerns may have to be revised if they turn out to be inconsistent with what is in the course of the investigation identified as the theory of personal identity with the greatest explanatory power. What is sought, then, is a *reflective equilibrium* between our intuitions about identity-related practical concerns and theories of personal identity.

The book is divided into eight chapters in two parts. The first part focuses on the role of personal identity in *self-regarding* ethics, covering practical issues which include the possibility of immortality and the rationality of anticipation

and self-concern. These concepts serve Shoemaker as a background for the discussion of four basic theories of personal identity – the soul theory, the memory theory, the body theory, and the brain theory – and two more sophisticated theories – the biological theory and the psychological theory. Shoemaker concludes that the four basic theories are quite inadequate in their own terms and that the more sophisticated theories are each controversial – explaining some of our intuitions and failing in others. However, with respect to anticipation and self-concern, the psychological theory seems to be more adequate than the biological approach. The possibility of immortality is shown to be very difficult to justify on any theory.

Shoemaker then discusses two radical approaches – the narrative theory and the "identity-does-not-matter" (IDM) view, which have been designed to fix the problems of the established theories. He shows that the success of the narrative view in explaining our concerns is dubious, and, moreover, the theory is inherently vague, which makes its application especially difficult. The IDM view, in contrast, is quite plausible and Shoemaker regularly turns to it throughout the book to seek solutions to other problems discussed, because it offers a more fine-grained analysis. It is made clear, however, that by adopting the IDM view, one is forced to give up the general assumption of the whole project: if identity does not matter, the practical concerns are not justified by the logical relation of numerical identity, but by other *continuity* relations, which differ from identity.

The second part of the book focuses on the relevance of personal identity for *other-regarding* ethics. Chapters four and five present the moral issues at the beginning of life, such as abortion, stem cell research, cloning, genetic intervention and population ethics. Shoemaker reaches the following conclusions:

- In the abortion debate, the only theory that could justify the identity between a fetus and the adult is the biological theory, but that theory is morally irrelevant, so it cannot be used to justify the immorality of killing fetuses.
- The only identity-based objection to stem-cell research can come from the soul theory, which is deeply flawed.
- No plausible theory of personal identity can support objections to human cloning.
- In realistic cases of genetic intervention, such intervention does not have the potential to change an individual's identity.
- Radical cases of enhancement may threaten one's narrative identity, but they can also be interpreted in a way that retains the narrative identity of the enhanced individual (partly due to the vagueness of the narrative criterion).

- Serious implications can be shown to follow from personal identity theory for intergenerational justice. No theory, unfortunately, offers a plausible solution to the problems.

A note of caution: the fact that no objections to certain practices can be drawn from personal identity theory does by no means mean that there aren't any other legitimate objections to the practices. But these are out of the focus of Shoemaker's book.

Chapter six deals with the moral issues at the end of life: advance directives and the death of multiple personalities in dissociative identity disorder. Both issues are extremely mind-boggling and thought-provoking. Shoemaker argues that, on any theory of personal identity, it is very difficult to justify our intuition that advance directives should be respected. With respect to multiple personalities, Shoemaker defends the view that alter-egos are different persons in one body. But in that case it becomes difficult to resolve a clash in our intuitions: on the one hand, we believe that all persons deserve moral protection and should not be killed (eliminated by treatment), on the other, the doctors who treat DID do not act immorally. All in all, these two difficult issues give slightly more support for the biological theory of personal identity.

Then two extensive chapters follow, treating moral responsibility and the implications of personal identity for ethical theory. The main conclusion of the first chapter is that while responsibility entails ownership of the actions for which one is responsible, ownership does not entail identity with the agent. Rather, it is the continuity of a subset of the person's psychological make-up. The precise definition of what falls into the subset is difficult to provide, but the IDM view comes closer to truth than its opponents.

The other chapter focuses on the assessment of the implications of Parfitian reductionism in personal identity for normative theory. Shoemaker deals with Parfit's utilitarianism and Brink's rational egoism, as well as contractarian and Kantian objections to reductionism. One important claim that crystalizes in the discussions is that it is crucial to answer the normative question of what entities are the proper targets of the individual concerns. Shoemaker discusses momentary experiencers, selves and persons. Each alternative entails a different conception of normative ethics.

The conclusion assesses the correct methodology to adopt when dealing with issues on the border of ethics and personal identity. Shoemaker's book is based on the assumption that the practical concerns derive their justification from a metaphysical theory of personal identity. This assumption has, however, been challenged. Some authors support an "ethics first" approach, claiming that metaphysics is irrelevant, because the practical concerns derive their justifica-

tion from practice, not theory. Shoemaker acknowledges the seriousness of this challenge, but believes that more needs to be said to show that the challenge affects all of the discussed concerns. And this brings us to the outcome of Shoemaker's work.

Shoemaker reaches what might at first sight be a surprising conclusion. Our intuitions about the individual practical concerns are not uniform enough to be explained by a single theory of personal identity. Thus, some require the psychological theory (anticipation) some seem to track biological continuity (compensation) while others cannot be explained by a theory of identity at all (responsibility). One may soften the impact of the conclusion, however, by the observation that the set of identity-related practical concerns is, in fact, a relatively heterogeneous class of concerns, which have traditionally been unified merely by the relatively superficial belief that they presuppose personal identity in time. However, once we start looking more closely at what such identity may consist in, it becomes clear that there is a number of intertwined relations, which normally go together, but can be conceptually distinguished, and that the concerns actually only attach to these more elementary relations. This, I believe, is the most general outcome of the book.

But by saying that, I do not mean to imply that other important conclusions have not been reached. In fact, every chapter contains a number of conclusions that are well-supported by clearly presented arguments, and where no decisive conclusion has been reached, the reader is always shown why one is so hard to achieve. All in all, I believe the book is an extremely useful tool for anyone who would like to map the enormously rich field between ethics and personal identity, as well as advanced students in the field who will benefit from Shoemaker's insight.

I what follows, I would like to address briefly some issues that came to my mind while reading the book. I am fully aware that the scope of an introductory book did not allow for their thorough discussion.

The metaphysical and epistemological criteria of personal identity

The first one concerns the relationship between the metaphysical and epistemological criteria of personal identity. In the introduction Shoemaker makes the distinction between a metaphysical criterion specifying what personal identity consists in, and an epistemological criterion providing a way of identifying personal identity. For instance, the soul theory may provide an answer to the question of what the identity between a person identified at an earlier time and a person identified at a later time consists in. But it will hardly serve as a useful epistemological criterion, because souls are usually thought of as immaterial

and independent of the material aspects of human beings. Shoemaker says (p. 15) that his main objective is to find a metaphysical criterion, but he admits that an acceptable metaphysical criterion would lose some points if it didn't fare well on the epistemological side. But throughout the book it soon becomes clear that the two criteria are actually tied much more closely than it seems. If we are interested in personal identity because we want to justify practical concerns, we have to be able to determine whether the metaphysical criterion of personal identity holds, that is, we have to have epistemic access to the metaphysical facts in which personal identity consists.

So we must inevitably ask the question: Which metaphysical criterion is epistemologically most successful? We have already seen that epistemic access to souls is impossible, so the soul theory fails. In fact, this was pointed out by Locke, who, driven by the motivation to construct a theory of personal identity that could justify accountability, developed the memory theory. He claimed we do have knowledge of our own persistence, but if our identity resided in souls, it would be impossible. Instead, sameness of consciousness, which is usually interpreted as memory connectedness, is what enables our epistemic access to our identity. How do I know that I am the same person who got into bed last night? I don't need to look for a soul, I don't even need to look in the mirror to check the sameness of body, I simply remember from the inside the experience of lying into my bed and all other experiences that I had the previous evening. So memory connections are a plausible, albeit fallible, tool for first person identification.

However, this theory quickly runs into trouble as a metaphysical criterion and needs drastic revisions. The most important is the shift from memory connectedness to memory continuity and further to the richer relation of psychological continuity. The shift is caused by the desire to use memory as a criterion of numerical identity, which is transitive, and by the contingent fact that people forget, which makes memory intransitive. To fix this, philosophers have suggested that chains of memories be used instead of direct memories as a criterion of identity. So even though I may not remember any experiences from my teen age when I am old and forgetful, I will be identical to the teenager, because I will remember times in which I remembered the teen-age experiences. This fixes the logical and metaphysical problem, but seems to introduce epistemological difficulties. Suppose that I remember my life in 1980, but not my earlier life in 1960. But I did remember it in 1980. Since I remember 1980, I can be introspectively sure that I lived in 1980. But what good is the fact that in 1980 I remembered 1960 to my current knowledge of my life in 1960? The mental time travel that is enabled by direct memories stops in 1980. The memory of me living in 1980 does not carry any information about me

remembering at that time my life in 1960. So even though the memory continuity theory may be more suitable as a metaphysical criterion of personal identity, as an epistemological criterion it faces a problem that the memory connectedness criterion is immune to.

Many authors reject even the memory continuity theory, and instead of a single psychological relation they propose a number of such, including the intention-future experience relation, sameness of beliefs over time, and similarity of character. A sufficient number of such relations is termed *strong psychological connectedness*, and their chain is termed *psychological continuity*. The psychological continuity theory is generally regarded as one of the most successful ones, and Shoemaker concludes that one of its advantages is that it accounts for self-identification very well (p. 84). But I think the only relation that enables introspective self-identification is memory connectedness and all the relations that authors have added to it to fix its metaphysical problems presuppose memory in our introspective effort to identify and re-identify them. For instance, the only evidence that I have the same intentions and character as I had a week ago is that I remember them. Thus, memory connectedness is the key to our self-identification, but it cannot serve as a metaphysical criterion of personal identity. This creates a problem for the further debate of practical concerns, because if we agree that they are not justified solely by memory connectedness, we are abandoning the safest epistemological criterion.

Anticipation and self-concern

Another issue I would like to discuss is the advantage that the psychological theory is supposed to have over the biological theory in explaining the rationality of anticipation and self-concern.

Shoemaker starts with the commonsense belief that a necessary condition for rational anticipation and self-concern is identity (p. 60). If we believe that identity grounds anticipation and self-concern, we must find a theory of personal identity which will be capable of doing so.

Shoemaker believes that the psychological theory does a much better job at explaining the two concerns than the biological theory (p. 64, pp. 82-83). It seems that I can only rationally anticipate the experiences of my psychological descendants. If some future person won't be connected to my current psychological stream, then it's hard to see how I could rationally anticipate his experiences. And since self-concern presupposes anticipation, how could I have that special type of concern for his well-being?

I agree with the analysis of anticipation, but it seems to me that by making anticipation a necessary condition of self-concern we lose the possibility of ac-

counting for a large number of cases in which people are concerned for their own well-being in the absence of the possibility of anticipation of their experiences.

For lack of space I will offer one such example, a version of which has actually occurred.[1] Suppose that you need to undergo a minor operation that involves full anesthetics. When you have been given the drug and fall into deep sleep, you are sexually assaulted by the surgeons, who are careful enough not to leave any signs of their behavior. Then, they routinely perform the operation and in an hour or so you wake up, not having a clue about what has been going on. I believe that everyone has a reason to be concerned that a similar incident does not happen to them. But how could this form of self-concern possibly be legitimate if the necessary condition of self-concern is not met. Under the influence of anesthetics, one has no conscious experiences, so one cannot rationally anticipate them. But if anticipation is a necessary condition of self-concern, self-concern is irrational in this case. This seems quite incorrect to me. I believe that one's well-being is not exhausted by one's experiences, and, thus, self-concern is legitimate even in the absence of any experiences. Unfortunately, I have to leave aside an outline of an explanation of what relations I believe ground self-concern, if it is not psychological continuity. I do agree with Shoemaker, however, that anticipation is a wholly psychological matter.

The ground for responsibility

Another issue concerns the grounds for moral responsibility. Shoemaker believes that biological continuity cannot justify moral responsibility. He argues that it is not sufficient, because we would find it inappropriate to blame an individual with Alzheimer's disease for the crimes of the person he used to be, in spite of their biological continuity. The cerebrum transplant thought experiment further shows that biological continuity is not even necessary. Shoemaker then analyzes responsibility in terms of some subtle psychological capacities (p. 216).

What is striking is one of the conclusions that Shoemaker comes to after he exposes the limitations of the individual theories of personal identity. He states that maybe there isn't a single criterion of responsibility. Maybe we negotiate what criteria to use depending on the particular context. So in one context we may ground our judgment by biological continuity, such as in the case of me holding responsible my comatose father for his repeated humiliations of

[1] http://www.thestar.com/news/crime/2013/11/19/anesthesiologist_dr_george_doodnaught_guilty_of_sexually_assaulting_21_female_patients.html

me in the past. In another context it may be psychological continuity, such as in the case when a drunken person goes on an anti-Semitic tirade and does not remember it later.

But one must wonder how biological continuity could do the job in the comatose father case. Shoemaker has already concluded that biological continuity is not sufficient, because certain complex mental capacities are necessary. But the comatose father does not have these mental capacities: he isn't capable of executing intentions, receptive to blame, or able to judge the fairness of me blaming him. If we agreed that he could be responsible in the absence of these capacities, why require them in other cases at all?

These are just a few of the ideas that were inspired by reading Shoemaker's rich book. I can only repeat that I recommend that anyone with an interest in the intersection of metaphysics and ethics read this book.

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